# Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development

## Annual Report 2012-2013

Prince Edward Island
CANADA

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# MINISTER'S LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To the Honourable H. Frank Lewis

Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island

Your Honour:

I have the honour to submit herewith the Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2013.

I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

Ron MacKinley

Minister of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development

Ministre des Pêches, de l'Aquaculture et du Développement rural

Honorable H. Frank Lewis Lieutenant-gouverneur de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

Votre Honneur,

J'ai l'honneur de soumettre sous ce pli le rapport annuel du ministère des Pêches, de l'Aquaculture et du Développement rural pour l'année financière se terminant le 31 mars 2013.

Respectueusement soumis,

# DEPUTY MINISTER'S OVERVIEW

To the Honourable Ron W. MacKinley

Minister of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development

Dear Minister:

It is my pleasure to present the 2012-13 Annual Report for the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development. This report is an overview of work carried out to reach department goals for the period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013.

The 2012-13 fiscal year was a busy year for Department staff. Numerous initiatives were supported in the fisheries, aquaculture, and rural development sectors. Customer service excellence remained a high priority at Access PEI. Department activities were carried out within budget and respected the Department's Three Year Management Plan. The Department, under your leadership, strengthened its communication efforts and ensured that our clients were informed of the quality advice, information and programs that we deliver.

It was my pleasure to serve as Deputy Minister for the department responsible to implement programs and services to such a wide range of clients including fishers, aquaculturists, seafood buyers, processors, community groups, municipalities, economic development organizations, rural business owners and those Islanders who use the services of Access PEI.

The department remains committed to its mandate to contribute to the growth of sustainable, prosperous fishing, aquaculture and seafood processing enterprises and provide policy leadership in developing new approaches to rural community development, service delivery and employment programs, the majority of which are rural-based.

I wish to close by acknowledging the dedicated staff of the department who remain committed to delivering quality programs and services to Islanders.

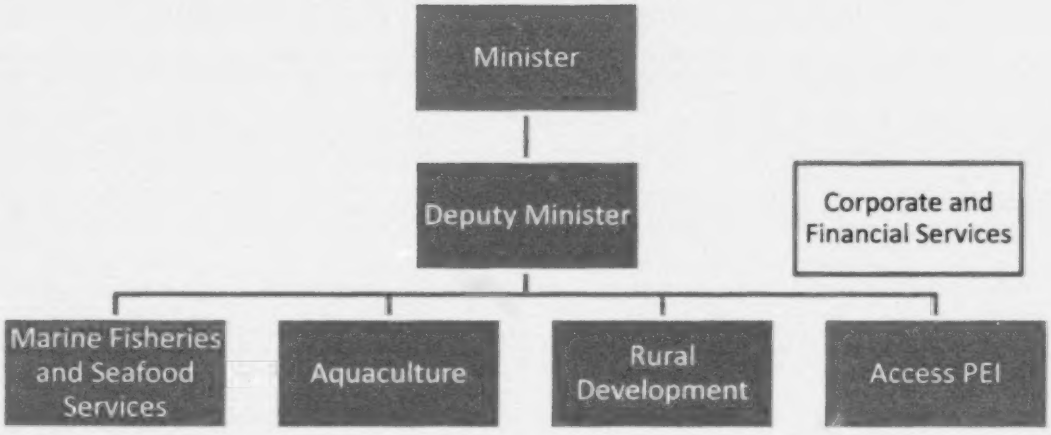
Sincerely,

Richard Gallant

Richard Gallant, Deputy Minister

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Department of Fisheries,
Aquaculture and Rural Development



# 2012/2013 EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES

**2012-2013 Expenditures and Revenue**

| Division | Original Budget | Revised Budget | Actual Expenditure/Revenue |
|---|---|---|---|
| **EXPENDITURE BUDGET** | | | |
| Department Management | $549,000 | $569,800 | $527,675 |
| Marine Fisheries and Seafood Services | $1,851,700 | $1,644,100 | $1,630,987 |
| Aquaculture Division | $1,204,600 | $1,230,000 | $1,173,784 |
| Single Window Service | $2,794,300 | $2,659,400 | $2,588,978 |
| Rural Development | $3,907,500 | $3,773,800 | $3,669,779 |
| **Total** | **$10,307,100** | **$9,877,100** | **$9,591,203** |
| **REVENUE BUDGET** | | | |
| Department Revenue | $46,200 | $46,200 | $41,126 |
| **Total** | **$46,200** | **$46,200** | **$41,126** |
| **TOTAL NET** | **$10,260,900** | **$9,830,900** | **$9,550,077** |

(Based on Oracle Financials June 20/13)

# CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Corporate and Financial Services Division is responsible for providing management services within the Department of Agriculture and Forestry and the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development. Government announced that effective April 1, 2012 all accounting and HR functions would be centralized. Four employees from the financial services unit were transferred to the Treasury Board Secretariat and three employees from the HR unit were transferred to the Public Service Commission.

The mandate of the division is to support the effective management of the departments through the delivery of key corporate services. In this capacity, the division works closely with the Minister's offices and the divisions within the two departments.

The following table outlines the primary management functions performed by the Corporate and Financial Services Division:

| Responsibility Area | Management Functions |
|---|---|
| Financial Administration | Fiscal management and budgetary control; financial reporting and analysis, financial administration and accounting services; records management |
| Human Resource Management | Human Resource planning; benefits, staffing, payroll, and labour relations |

## Human Resources

The Human Resources section provides services to the department in the administration of staffing, classification, personnel, payroll, labor relations and professional development. Human Resources provide proactive coaching, consultation and direction to department management and staff on human resource matters.

The Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development continues with the implementation of its 2011-2014 Human Resource Plan.

The ongoing development of a learning culture within the Department continues with opportunities for all employees. Through various focus groups, surveys, and other means in which to engage employees in identifying their training needs, the Department continues to support staff with opportunities to address continuing education and learning opportunities.

The Department continues to enhance French Language capacity with 6 positions identified as bilingual and by encouraging French language training for staff across the department. As

identified in the HR Plan, the Department is committed to the annual completion of Performance Development Plans by the end of March each year.

**Position Establishment (as of March 31, 2013)**

| | Full Time | Part Time | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Minister's Office | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Aquaculture | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| Marine Fisheries & Seafood Services | 8 | 2 | 10 |
| Access PEI | 48 | 0 | 48 |
| Rural Development | 16 | 1 | 17 |
| Total | 83 | 5 | 88 |

In addition to the above established permanent positions, the department employed 24 casuals, 5 PSC temporaries and 5 students.

# MARINE FISHERIES AND SEAFOOD SERVICES DIVISION

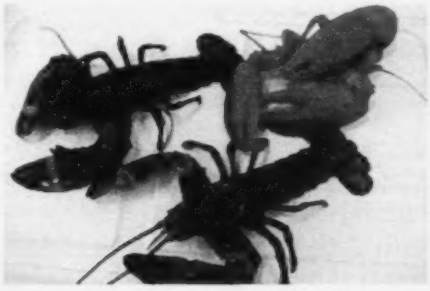
*The division's mission is to provide quality advice, assistance and information to clients, as well as advocate on behalf of the marine fisheries industry with the goal to support the development of the fishing industry in a sustainable manner.*

## *Marine Fisheries Section*

The main role of the Marine Fisheries Section is to represent the interests of Prince Edward Island within the federal advisory committee process and to assist the Island fishing industry to represent their views fairly and fully.

### Lobster Resource Monitoring Program

The Lobster Resource Monitoring Program continued with the collection of data on the Island's lobster resource through volunteer index fishermen recording daily information in logbooks. At-sea sampling also took place with department staff collecting information on board commercial fishing vessels. Over 100 fishermen participated in the program.



### Lobster Research

A collaborative project involving the department, Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Science, and the Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association continued in 2012 with 180 lobster larval collectors placed in six locations. The locations were in waters adjacent to Skinner's Pond, Northport, Covehead, Fortune, Murray River and Nine Mile Creek. This year was the fourth year for collector deployment and the goal of the project is to develop a larvae settlement index for each location.

The department collaborated with lobster fishermen to further investigate the potential of green crab as lobster bait. Several fishermen used green crab to try and determine whether it may be used as bait during the commercial fishery.

The department continued to support the Atlantic Veterinary College's Lobster Science Centre. The department also contributed to the Centre's project entitled, "Atlantic Lobster Moult & Quality Project".

### Lobster Management

The 2012 Lobster Management Plan for the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence, including LFAs 24, 25 and 26A, was the second year of a multi-year plan to 2014. The new plan included carapace size increases, escape mechanism size increases, a reliable electronic catch and effort data collection system and an effective biodegradable panel for traps.

The management plan for LFA's 24 and 26A for the 2012 season included a minimum legal carapace size of 71 mm and the prohibited size range of 115 to 129 mm whereby all female lobsters in that range were to be returned to the water. At the request of LFA 26A fishers in Prince Edward Island, a requirement for fishers to string a minimum of six lobster traps per line was continued in 2012 after its implementation in 2007. This measure is only for a portion of water adjacent to Prince Edward Island in LFA 26A. Further to a request by a portion of LFA 24 harvesters to address the concentration of lobster fishing effort within portions of the LFA and until discussions between DFO and stakeholders can occur, DFO separated LFA 24 into two separate administrative areas east and west of Malpeque Harbour.

Fishermen can still fish anywhere within LFA 24. The definition of LFA 24 was also changed in the regulations and fishermen no longer need to request a separate license condition to have access to MacLeod's Ledge.

The 2012 lobster fishery management plan for LFA 25 included the following management measures; a minimum legal carapace size of 71 mm, a maximum size of 114 mm for females, a mandatory height of 40 mm for escape mechanisms required on traps, a maximum size for entrance hoops in traps was a diameter of 152 mm, and the possession of lobster and fishing gear was prohibited between 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 am. A loading and offloading restriction of lobster traps based on provinces was added to license conditions in 2012. Further to a request by harvesters in LFA 25 from PEI and until further notice, the maximum number of traps per fisher was reduced from 250 to 240. DFO provided tags for 2,000 traps to the Prince County Fishermen's Association and a trap transfer program was carried out again this year to help fishers partially fund their sustainability plan.

**Future Fisher Program**

The department continued to assist first-time lobster fishers with this financial assistance and education program. The Future Fisher Program was launched in 2009 and now has assisted over 74 new entrants. In 2012/2013, the program assisted 19 new entrants to the fishery enhancing their knowledge of many aspects of the lobster industry, including management, biology, economics and processing. This program, which is unique in Atlantic Canada, was renewed for four more years in November.

**Lobster Landings**

Catches for the 2012 season were approximately 16.2 million pounds in LFA 24; 6.5 million pounds in LFA 26A; 4.6 million pounds for LFA 25, for a total of 27.3 million pounds. The 2012 landings were 31% higher than in 2011. The highest landings ever recorded for PEI.

The spring season opened on April 30 and closed on June 30. Canner prices started at $4.30 and market prices were $4.75. The fall season opened on August 13 and closed on October 10.
Fall prices were $2.50 for canners and $2.75 for markets.

**Toad Crab**

In 2012, eleven commercial licence holders were eligible to fish in the sub-zone from Covehead Harbour to East Point. However, due to poor market demand and the high cost of fishing, there were no toad crab landings in 2012.

**Rock Crab**

2012 landings of rock crab were approximately 1,739 metric tonnes (mt) with a landed value of $1.9 million. These landings included crab landed in the directed rock crab fisheries and crab retained as a by-catch during the lobster fisheries. The range in price for rock crab was $ 0.42 to $0.45 per pound.

Fishermen remain concerned with Fisheries and Oceans Canada's removal of conditions previously in place to control the retention of rock crab during the lobster fishery. Fishers were concerned over the

amount and size of rock crab landed as by-catch and would like to see a return of the conditions for daily limits, and minimum legal sizes. The department continued to support fishers in their effort to resolve this issue.

There are 43 Prince Edward Island rock crab fisher licences and two First Nations allocations in Area 26A. Each licence maintains a quota of 24 mt. The 2012 fishery opened on August 7 and closed on November 24. Prince Edward Island fishermen landed 947 mt.

In Area 25, the first season began on June 30 and ended July 28 while the second season began on October 16 and ended on November 30. There are 23 Prince Edward Island licence holders and three First Nations allocations. Each Prince Edward Island fisher had a quota of 25 mt. The landing in this area for Prince Edward Island in 2012 was 653 mt.

Area 24 had 16 fishers with permits, one licence holder and five First Nations participants. There was no individual or overall quota in this area and landings in 2012 were 139 mt.

### Bluefin Tuna

For the 2012 bluefin tuna season, the Prince Edward Island tuna industry agreed on a conservation harvesting plan for its allocation of 126.25 mt of the Canadian inshore bluefin tuna quota. The Department participated in developing the plan with the PEIFA Tuna Advisory Board and local DFO. It was decided to allow each licence holder to have one tag, similar to the 2011 season, with a re-allocation date in October for the remaining quota. All 359 licence holders were active in 2012.

Final figures showed a total of 432 fish were landed by PEI fishers, amounting to 126.6 mt, with an average weight of 293 kgs.

| 2012 | |
|---|---|
| Annandale | 1 |
| Beach Point | 1 |
| Machon's Point | 66 |
| Milligan's Wharf | 2 |
| Naufrage | 21 |
| North Lake | 143 |
| North Rustico | 1 |
| Northport | 23 |
| Red Head | 8 |
| Savage Harbour | 4 |
| Seacow Pond | 43 |
| Souris | 13 |
| Tignish Run | 102 |
| Off Island Ports | 4 |
| TOTAL | 432 |

**Charter Boat Fishery**
The tuna charter boat (hook and release) fishery began in mid-July and lasted until mid-October. Over thirty captains registered for this type of fishing. Fishers had to meet Transport Canada requirements for carrying passengers in order to participate. DFO set aside a small allocation to allow this type of fishery to be conducted, to address the small mortality rate.

There were two derbies this year; one at each end of the Island. Tignish Initiatives had a successful one day tourney with its inaugural event, with six boats participating. The North Lake Canada Cup was highly successful with over 30 teams entered for the three day event. The Department provided assistance to both events.

**Premier's Tuna Cup Award**
Prince Edward Island tuna captains David Dixon and Kirk Jamieson shared the honour of receiving the 2012 Premier's Cup for landing the largest bluefin tunas in 2012. Each bluefin weighed 480 kilograms or 1,058 pounds. Mr. Jamieson landed his tuna on September 23 off North Lake. Ten days later, Mr. Dixon caught his tuna in the same area. The cup is awarded annually to recognize the importance of the tuna fishery to the economy and the international recognition it brings to Prince Edward Island.

**4RST Atlantic Halibut**
On August 28, 2012 Prince Edward Island had a one day halibut fishery for 170 registered fishers. A total of 23.3 mt were landed from a quota of 16.8 mt. Landings varied from 20 kgs to over 1,000 kgs per vessel. The overage will be reconciled within the 2013 fleet quota. The overall 4RST Atlantic halibut quota was increased to 720 mt in 2012. PEI fixed gear fleet received 3.1% of the fixed gear quota.

**Spring Herring**
The 2012 Area 16 spring herring quota (southern Gulf of St. Lawrence) remained at 2,000 mt for 2012 and 2013 seasons. The western PEI spring herring fishery began on April 26, with the initial quota of 454 mt and a weekly boat limit of 10,206 kgs. PEI landed 54 mt of spring herring in 2012. Fishermen received 30-40 cents /lb as lobster bait was in demand with the shortage of supply.

**Fall Herring**
Fall Herring quota was reduced by 35 % to 43,500 mt from 65,000mt as a result of decreased biomass. The Prince Edward Island herring fishery takes place in two main areas; off North Cape in Herring Fishing Area (HFA) 16E, and Fishermen's Bank, in HFA 16G. Each HFA has its own quota and the fishers set the season. Quota reconciliation policy was brought in, where any overruns will be deducted from 2013 season. All 7 fishing areas were reduced accordingly, as well as the large purse seine fleet.

Western PEI (16C/E) quota was set at 6,275 mt with final landings of 6,857 mt shared with NB fishers. Landings in the summer fishery were 4 mt from a quota of 320 mt. 16G - Fishermen's Bank allocation was 5,476 mt. Fishers decided to maintain summer fisheries on both North and South sides of 16G. Overall landings were 3,315 mt.

PEIFA continued conducting the acoustic herring survey at both ends of the Island with provincial assistance. This data will be used to assist in determining the overall biomass of the stock.

**Gulf Shrimp**

In 2012, Prince Edward Island received 376 mt allocation of Gulf Shrimp. The shrimp fishery is located in three main areas: Sept Isles, Anticosti and Esquiman off the coast of Quebec. In 2012, the Gulf Shrimp total allowable catch was set at 32,848 mt. At the annual Gulf Shrimp Advisory meeting, the Department and the PEIFA continued to request a more equitable share of this resource.

**Northern Shrimp**

The 2012 total allowable catch for Shrimp Fishing Area 3L had decreased from 2011 by 37% to 12,000 mt. Canada received 83 percent of this quota. Despite the reduction in quota, Prince Edward Island Consortium's allocation remained at 1,500 mt since its inception in 2000. The Prince Edward Island Atlantic Shrimp Corporation signed a multi-year agreement with Ocean Choice International in 2005 to fish the Prince Edward Island shrimp allocation. Proceeds are invested in projects that involve harvesters, processors and the AVC Lobster Science Centre.

## *Seafood Services Section*

Seafood Services provides advice and assistance to clients regarding maintenance of fish quality and production of quality seafood products. The section administers regulations under the *Prince Edward Island Fisheries Act* and the *Prince Edward Island Fish Inspection Act*. The section is also responsible for gathering, compiling and publishing fisheries information including statistical data relating to the maintenance and development of fishery resources.

The section also delivers development projects for the improvement of fishing ports and shellfish landing sites under provincial jurisdiction.

**Licensing**

The Seafood Services Section is responsible for the administration of licenses pertaining to processing, buying and peddling under the *Prince Edward Island Fisheries Act Regulations*. Fish processing licenses are divided into four categories: primary processing, secondary processing, lobster cookroom (limited to 144 square feet of processing area) and groundfish processing (limited to 750 square feet of processing area). In 2012, the department issued 29 primary processing licenses, four secondary processing licenses, 17 lobster cookroom licenses and six groundfish processing licenses.

Fish buying licenses are issued on a species-per-buying-station basis. The six categories are lobster, other crustaceans, groundfish, pelagic, molluscs and other fish. During 2012, the department issued 166 spring and 23 fall lobster buying licenses, 94 other crustaceans, 51 groundfish, 127 pelagic, 121 mollusc and four other licenses.

In addition, 36 fish peddling licenses were issued to individuals and/or companies who peddle fish to consumers throughout Prince Edward Island.

Two fisheries inspection officers were responsible for enforcing regulations under the *Prince Edward Island Fish Inspection Act* and the *Prince Edward Island Fisheries Act*.

**Dead Mammal Disposal**
Seafood Services Section is responsible for coordination of the removal of dead marine mammals that land on Island beaches throughout the year. The majority of these mammals are examined either in the field by personnel from the Atlantic Veterinary College, or in some cases, the carcasses are transported to the Atlantic Veterinary College for post mortem examination.

Staff worked closely with Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officers of the Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry in the disposal of carcasses. The cost for disposal of dead mammals is the responsibility of the department and the amount depends on the size, location and condition of the carcass.

## Shellfish Landing Sites

The Seafood Services Section is responsible for the maintenance of approximately 50 shellfish landing sites throughout the province. There are erosion problems on the coastline and contractors are hired periodically to ensure that shellfishers have access to the shellfish harvesting areas.

## Seafood Market Initiatives

The department, in collaboration with Innovation PEI and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, participated in seafood buyer missions by hosting delegations from China, India, Europe and the United States. The department worked with Innovation PEI to coordinate a buyers program to coincide with the PEI International Shellfish Festival. This buyers group included representation from China, the Caribbean and Western Canada.

**Western Canada Market Development**
In September 2012, the Minister held seafood events in Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta. These events were to increase awareness and demand for Prince Edward Island seafood products in western Canada and targeted chefs, buyers and restaurateurs.

**Asia Market Development**
In November 2012, the Minister led a delegation of Prince Edward Island seafood businesses, trade officials and industry stakeholders to the largest seafood show in Asia, the China Fisheries and Seafood Expo in Dalian. The trade mission also included a stop in Tokyo, Japan for meetings and seafood market visits.

**International Boston Seafood Show**
Department staff participated in a delegation of Prince Edward Island seafood businesses, trade officials and industry stakeholders to the International Boston Seafood Show from March 11-12, 2013. The show is the largest seafood exposition in North America.

**European Seafood Exposition**
The department, in collaboration with Innovation PEI, along with a delegation of Prince Edward Island seafood industry stakeholders attended the European Seafood Exposition from April 24-26, 2012. The show is the largest seafood trade fair in the world drawing buyers and sellers from 140 countries. The European Seafood Exposition continues to be the most important event for companies looking to enter and access the European seafood market.

## Seafood Promotion

### Prince Edward Island International Shellfish Festival

The department once again sponsored and was actively involved with the organization of the Prince Edward Island International Shellfish Festival. The festival held from September 13-16 was co-hosted by the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association and the Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance. The Shellfish Festival has grown into one of the largest promotions of shellfish in Eastern Canada.

### Minister's Shellfish Recognition Award

Tourism and Culture Minister, Robert Henderson, presented the 2012 Provincial Minister's Shellfish Recognition Awards to Stan Casey and John Sullivan, leading members of the shellfish industry. The award was presented during the opening of the Prince Edward Island International Shellfish Festival in Charlottetown. The shellfish recognition awards are presented annually to individuals for their success and leadership in shellfish harvesting, culturing, processing or marketing.

### Out of the Sea and Over the Coals

The department's Island summer seafood promotion program, Out of the Sea and Over the Coals, continued in 2012. This program has been in operation for over 20 years and aims to bring the taste of grilled seafood to visitors and Islanders alike. In 2012, the program hosted over 65 events at exhibitions, fairs, festivals, national and provincial parks, and other venues such as Confederation and Spinnaker's Landing. The events were demonstrated by two post secondary education students and attracted over 2,500 people. These included visitors to Prince Edward Island from across Canada, the United States and Europe. For many this marked their first PEI seafood experience.

# AQUACULTURE DIVISION

*The division's mandate is to provide high quality advice, assistance and information to the Prince Edward Island shellfish and finfish aquaculture and shellfish estuarial fishery sectors.*

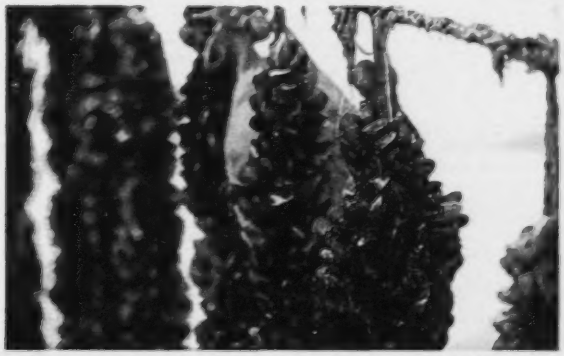
The Aquaculture Division provided program assistance to support the growth and sustainability of aquaculture businesses and to encourage the adoption of new technology. As well, the division administered programs and services to support the Island's estuarine shellfish fishery. In 2012, the landed value of shellfish and finfish products such as mussels, oysters, clams and salmonids was more than $44 million. Employment in the sector was represented by more than 2,500 jobs.

The activities and programs delivered by staff in the past year were diverse including: providing technical and biological advice to the shellfish and finfish sectors, delivering a number of incentive programs that complemented technical services and assisted in the overall development of the aquaculture sector, actively participating on several national and regional committees and working groups, and advocating on behalf of the Prince Edward Island aquaculture and estuarial shellfish industries.

**Mussel Monitoring Program**

The Aquaculture Division has delivered an annual Mussel Monitoring Program for mussel growers since 1982. In 2012, information for the program was collected from 33 areas, representing 21 river or bay systems, that are utilized for mussel spat collection and/or grow-out. The program assisted growers in the management of their lease sites by providing information on the timing of mussel spat-fall, mussel meat yields, water quality, tunicate larvae numbers and the presence of potentially toxic algal species. The majority of the program was conducted during the ice-free season, with a focus on mussel spat-fall prediction between May and August and monitoring for the presence of potentially harmful algae from September to December. In addition, mussel meat yield analysis was conducted periodically on samples collected from under the ice during the winter months.

Information collected through the Mussel Monitoring Program was communicated to industry via our website, telephone reporting line, and the annually published Mussel Monitoring Report, available both in print and online. Further information on the Mussel Monitoring Program can be obtained on the Division's website at www.gov.pe.ca/fard/musselmonitoring.



## Oyster Larvae Monitoring Program

The Aquaculture Division has been conducting an Oyster Larvae Monitoring Program since 1996. In 2012, 21 oyster seed collection areas were monitored for oyster larvae abundance and size. The areas were sampled two to three times per week, from mid June to mid August. In addition, oyster spat collectors were placed in the Bideford River to monitor abundance and frequency of spat-fall. The information collected is used by Industry members to determine the optimal time to deploy their collectors to maximize the amount of oysters they collect. In addition, the program information is used to compare recruitment information from different locations around Prince Edward Island and to provide information to industry on additional areas that may be used to collect oysters.

The results were reported to industry via the Oyster Monitoring Program's website, a telephone reporting line, through presentations at the industry meetings and the annually published Oyster Monitoring Report, available both in print and online. Further information on the Oyster Monitoring Program can be obtained on the Division's website at www.gov.pe.ca/fard/oystermonitoring/.

## Aquatic Invasive Species

Since 1997, six marine aquatic invasive species have been detected in the waters surrounding Prince Edward Island. These invasive species, which are negatively impacting the shellfish industry, include the oyster thief *(Codium fragile)*, the green crab (*Carcinus maenas)*, the clubbed tunicate (*Styela clava*), the golden star tunicate *(Botryllus schlosseri)*, the violet tunicate (*Botrylloides violaceus)* and the vase tunicate(*Ciona intestinalis*). The mussel industry has been significantly affected by impacts from tunicate fouling on crop and equipment. The green crab has also impacted shellfish species, particularly populations of soft-shelled clams in the eastern portion of Prince Edward Island, and the eel fishery by damaging eel nets and captured eels. Another invasive species, the oyster drill *(Urosalpinx cinera)*, which was introduced into Prince Edward Island waters in the early 1900's, is increasing in its population size and is impacting both cultured and wild oysters.

Staff continued to work with industry members and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to assess and monitor for the presence of aquatic invasive species within the province. Monitoring was conducted by staff to study the spread of the green crab and to investigate the spread of tunicate species. Staff were also involved in research and development projects to study methods to control tunicate fouling on aquaculture gear and products.

The Aquaculture Division is involved in several committees related to aquatic invasive species. The Aquaculture Division participate on the Aquatic Invasive Species Steering Committee, along with staff from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, academia and industry members. The committee provides direction for communication, monitoring and research activities related to aquatic invasive species on Prince Edward Island, and provides advice and support to the Introductions and Transfers Committee.

Division staff are members on the **Introductions and Transfers Committee** and the **Introductions and Transfers Tunicate Subcommittee**. The Introductions and Transfers Committee makes decisions on the introductions and transfers of aquatic organisms being transferred into and within Prince Edward Island

waters. The Introductions and Transfers Tunicate Subcommittee provides advice to the Introductions and Transfers Committee on policy and issues related to restrictions placed on shellfish transfers, as a result of tunicate infestations. The purpose of the restrictions is to prevent or slow the spread of tunicate species that may occur as a result of the shellfish transfers and other water based activities.

### Shellfish Disease Monitoring

Staff play an active role in partnership with industry members and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, to investigate and determine the causes of any shellfish mortalities.

Aquaculture staff continued to work closely with officials from Fisheries and Oceans Canada to conduct a monitoring program of oyster stocks throughout Prince Edward Island for the presence of MSX and SSO parasites. MSX and SSO can cause large scale mortalities of oysters. MSX was identified in 2002 in the Bras d'Or Lakes, Nova Scotia, but has never been identified in Prince Edward Island oysters. SSO was found in Island oysters in 2002, at non-threatening levels and has not been detected since. Importing oysters from MSX positive areas in Nova Scotia is prohibited by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

#### MSX Workshop

In January 2013 the division provided funding in partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the National Research Council and the Prince Edward Island Shrimp Corporation to support a one day MSX workshop to develop recommendations for an MSX response strategy for PEI. Participants included the aquaculture and commercial oyster fishing industries, provincial representatives from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, state representatives from Maine, and representatives from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

### Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program

Division staff assisted the federal partners responsible for the delivery of the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program. Staff are members of the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Working Group and the Atlantic Region Interdepartmental Shellfish Committee, where issues related to the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program and closures to shellfish harvest areas as a result of potential contamination, are discussed and determined. Staff routinely assist in sample collection to ensure areas that become closed due to potential contamination may be safely reopened as quickly as possible.

The department has partnered with the PEI Department of Environment, Labour and Justice to establish an industry/government forum on issues related to the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program and waste water treatment plants. The forum is held in conjunction with the bi-annual meetings of the PEI Shellfish Working Group. The forum provides an opportunity for improved communications between the shellfish industry and the operators of the waste water treatment plants.

### Conditional Shellfish Openings

Over the past several years, the division has worked with the federal partners of the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program to collect water and shellfish samples to ensure that shellfish from the Vernon-Orwell River system, Souris River and Brudenell Rivers can be harvested on a conditional basis. In 2012, staff continued to work with shellfish leaseholders in these three river systems to maintain conditional openings for the harvest of oysters, quahaugs and clams. The conditional openings, which operate under Conditional Management Plans, are a joint effort of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment Canada, the department and affected shellfish growers.

**Aquaculture Leasing Program**

The department continued, in partnership with the aquaculture industry, to provide management advice to Fisheries and Oceans Canada for delivery of the Aquaculture Leasing Program. The department has membership on the Leasing Management Board, which oversees development of work plans, financial plans, and the policy framework of the program. The Aquaculture Division also has representation on the Leasing Referral Committee and provides advice on applications for new aquaculture sites and other transactions. Under the Aquaculture Leasing Program, Fisheries and Oceans Canada makes the final decision on leasing matters however, the industry and province have a role in management decisions. All parties contribute financially to the program.

**National Aquatic Animal Health Program**

The National Aquatic Animal Health Program is a fish health program that addresses diseases of finfish, molluscs and crustaceans. The National Aquatic Animal Health Program is led by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, in cooperation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Staff have participated in consultations on regulatory changes to the *Health of Animals Act* that are required by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to manage the program and in consultations in the development of the program. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency now requires import permits for the importation of all aquatic animals into Canada, and is responsible for certifying exports out of Canada. The program will be further expanded to include permitting for movements of aquatic animals within Canada, based on presence/absence of listed diseases. Staff also participate on the National Aquatic Animal Health Committee, which provides input to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for the program development and implementation. For more information on the National Aquatic Animal Health Program, please visit the website at www.inspection.gc.ca/english/direct/naahp.

**Assistance Programs**

Three programs, the Aquaculture Technology Program, the Quality Oyster Aquaculture Program, and the Aquaculture Futures Program were delivered by the division to the aquaculture sector. These programs assisted the industry to: evaluate new technologies, increase production capacity of aquaculture operations, stimulate applied research and development activity, and to assist in strategic planning, business development and industry promotion. The division continued to provide support to the Atlantic Veterinary College's Shellfish Research Program. A contribution by the division provided the Atlantic Veterinary College with the necessary infrastructure and support to attract funding and conduct research projects focusing on priorities that are identified as priorities by the Island shellfish fishing and aquaculture industries. The division also provided financial support to the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association to carry out oyster enhancement activities on public fishing grounds. Projects included seed collection, oyster relays and shell spreading. The enhancement activities are carried out with the goal to improve oyster quality and increase the size and number of publically fished oyster beds. The Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association cost-shared the oyster enhancement activities and delivered the program with technical assistance from staff of the Aquaculture Division. The long-term commitment of the department to the enhancement of the public oyster fishery has resulted in increased landings and opportunities for oyster fishers.

### Mussel Mission to Ireland

The Division provided funding support in partnership with Innovation PEI and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, to the PEI Aquaculture Alliance to coordinate an information exchange mission to Ireland for PEI mussel growers. The growers conducted field visits, tours and meetings focusing on the highly successful mussel industry in Ireland. The growers toured mussel growing and harvesting areas meeting with large and small growers. In addition, the growers met with officials from the Irish Sea Fisheries Board (BIM), the key research institute for marine studies in Ireland.

### Industry Led Environmental Management System Project

The Division provided funding to the PEI Aquaculture Alliance to provide information to industry on the requirements to establish an environmental management system for shellfish farms. The process of companies becoming certified as producers of environmentally sustainable seafood will require that industry become educated in the certification process and adopt specific practices that will ensure that their companies are able to obtain certification status. This project was led by the PEI Aquaculture Alliance's Research and Development Coordinator.

### Aquaculture Canada

The division partnered with the Aquaculture Association of Canada to co-host Aquaculture Canada 2012. The last time the conference was held in Prince Edward Island was 2002. The theme of the 2012 conference was "New Frontiers: Bridging Technology and Economic Growth," and covered topics such as fish and shellfish health, pest and predator control and environmental monitoring. In addition, there were two focused forums; a cultured shellfish forum and a sustainability forum. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for industry members, scientists and regulators to exchange information to ensure the success and sustainability of Canadian aquaculture operations.

### PEI Oyster Society™

The Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance and the division partnered to create a new culinary tradition that celebrates Prince Edward Island oysters. The campaign centres on the creation of the PEI Oyster Society™ whose goal is to get Islanders and tourists to eat fresh shucked oysters at participating restaurants. Thirty-one local restaurants served up fresh shucked Prince Edward Island oysters during the month of August so that Islanders and tourists could get "shucked in" to the PEI Oyster Society™.

### PEI Aquaculture Alliance Strategic Plan

The division provided support to the PEI Aquaculture Alliance for a project to update their strategic plan. As the industry continues to advance, it is important that the Alliance's strategic plan, that sets their direction and priorities, remains current.

### Economic Impact

The PEI Aquaculture Alliance partnered with the division to conduct an economic impact analysis of the PEI aquaculture industry. The goal of the analysis was to provide a comprehensive economic overview of the aquaculture industry and its value to the economy of PEI.

### PEI Shellfish Association Research

The division was a co-applicant on two research projects led by the PEI Shellfish Association. One of the projects was focused on determining the capacity of oysters to naturally remove viral contamination when relayed to clean waters for cleansing. The second project was related to the productivity constraints related to oyster growth and reproduction in the East, West and North River systems. Funding for both projects was provided by the Aquaculture and Fisheries Research Initiative.

### Tyne Valley Oyster Festival

The division provided support to the 2012 Tyne Valley Oyster Festival. This festival is held in the first week of August every year and is growing in popularity. The Canadian Oyster Shucking Championship is held at the festival with the winner representing Canada at the World Oyster Shucking Championship in Galway, Ireland.

### Memorandum of Understanding on Aquaculture Development in Atlantic Canada

In 2008, provincial Ministers responsible for the development of aquaculture in Atlantic Canada, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work cooperatively to develop aquaculture in Atlantic Canada. Issues that will be addressed under the memorandum include aquatic invasive species, fish health management, coordination in research and development, investment in aquaculture, regional marketing and promotion, training, education and harmonization of regulations. Division staff are members of the Atlantic Canada MOU Committee that is working to address the priorities identified under the Memorandum of Understanding. Under the mandate of the MOU, staff are working to develop an initiative that will ensure co-operation and coordination of activities related to fish health in Atlantic Canada.

### Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (CCFAM)

### National Aquatic Invasive Species Committee

Staff have been active members on the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers National Aquatic Invasive Species Committee, which has a mandate to work on national initiatives related to aquatic invasive species. The committee provides a forum for the efficient and strategic coordination of aquatic invasive species control activities, the advancement of best practices in management of aquatic invasive species and the coordination of regulatory initiatives for control and management of aquatic invasive species.

### National Code on Introductions and Transfers Renewal Task Group

In June of 2012 at the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers Deputy Ministers' meeting, it was decided that the 2003 National Code on Introductions and Transfers needed to be updated to reflect changes due to the implementation of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's National Aquatic Animal Health Program. At this time, the Prince Edward Island Deputy Minister was chosen as Deputy Champion and subsequently PEI was selected as the provincial co-chair to lead the Introductions and Renewal Task Group. The Task Group was working on the Code into 2013, when it was slated to be completed.

**CCFAM/ Canadian Food Inspection Agency Committee**
The Aquaculture Division is also represented on the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers Committee that discuss national issues that are under the mandate of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, including issues related to the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program and the National Aquatic Animal Health Program.

**Strategic Management Committee**
Staff of the Aquaculture Division are active members on the national Strategic Management Committee on aquaculture, which provides Fisheries and Oceans Canada with input related to national issues on aquaculture governance and other matters related to aquaculture.

**National Aquaculture Strategic Action Planning Initiative**
Division staff were involved with the Fisheries and Oceans Canada's National Aquaculture Strategic Action Planning Initiative (NASAPI). The mandate of NASAPI is to develop a plan for the further development of aquaculture in Canada. This planning initiative identifies and develops plans to address the strategic initiatives that are required by the Canadian industry for further development. Division staff are working closely with the Prince Edward Island industry, to identify priorities for the industry and to ensure that they will be included as part of the National Aquaculture Strategic Action Planning Initiative. The development of this initiative falls under the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers Strategic Management Committee for aquaculture.

**Aquaculture Implementation Committee**
The Aquaculture Division collaborated with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the PEI Aquaculture Alliance on the Aquaculture Implementation Committee. This committee meets semi-annually and includes representation from DFO, the department, the PEI Aquaculture Alliance, the PEI Cultured Mussel Growers Association, the Island Oyster Growers Group, the PEI Finfish Growers Association, the Seafood Processors Association and the PEI Shellfish Association. Environment Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency are also members of the committee. The committee is responsible to prioritize actions under the National Aquaculture Strategic Action Plan as related to the development of aquaculture in PEI and to address other important issues to the PEI aquaculture industry.

# RURAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

*The division's mandate is to provide quality advice, assistance and information to rural clients and develop new approaches to community development and delivery of employment programs.*

The *Rural Action Plan – A Rural Economic Development Strategy for Prince Edward Island* is a framework of seven goals and 40 actions intended to focus on existing and new efforts to develop the rural economy. To review the full *Rural Action Plan,* please visit: www.gov.pe.ca/fard/ruralactionplan.

**The Rural Action Plan**

In its third year of implementation, The Rural Action Plan had many of its goals and actions underway or complete. Of the 40 actions identified in the Rural Action Plan, a total of 38 have now been completed or are ongoing.

Some key initiatives that were highlighted for 2012-2013 include:

The three Rural Action Centres and two satellite offices are open and have been operating for 18 months. The following partnerships have been formed to support the business and community groups utilizing the services housed in the Centres: Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CBDCs, Rural Development, Innovation PEI, Self-Employ PEI, and Regional Tourism Associations. Locations for the Rural Action Centres are Alberton, Wellington, Central Bedeque, Montague and Souris.

A Task Force on Land Use Policy was created to research the present planning system and lead public consultations. *A Provincial Land Use Policies Consultation* document was released and includes eight goals the task force would like the public to address at scheduled hearings or by sending presentations to government. They will then examine all findings before recommending land use policies to government.

Community Economic Development Investment Funds were coordinated by the Department of Finance, Energy and Municipal Affairs under the Community Development Equity Tax Credit Act and its regulations. Its objective is to facilitate local investment in Prince Edward Island business, with the ultimate aim of stimulating community development.

The provincial government, along with Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency has undertaken a rural diversification strategy to address the challenges in the three sub-regions identified in the Rural Action Plan. Efforts are being made to strengthen these areas and in turn the greater rural areas of Prince Edward Island through diversifying the economies.

Through Rural Development key investments continue to be made in our rural communities that support economic development and quality of life.

## Programs

**Community Development Program**
The Community Development Program contributed to initiatives which helped strengthen local communities. Sustainable projects which had a high degree of community involvement were assisted. Community involvement was measured in a variety of ways such as volunteers who contribute their time and/or expertise, fund raising monetary contributions via local businesses and organizations, and arranging multiple funding partnerships.

In 2012/2013, 20 projects were approved under Community Development Program, with a total contribution of $307,000. These projects had a total monetary value of over $1.2 million.

**Island Community Fund**
As part of the Rural Action Plan, the Island Community Fund became a development resource to assist the needs of rural communities.

The Island Community Fund is a six year initiative designed to provide funding to not for profit organizations, development groups and municipal governments to develop and implement initiatives that address the province's infrastructure needs. Urban and rural projects are eligible, however a focus was placed on infrastructure needs in rural areas.

The fund gives priority to capital projects which improve rural capacity, support regional and provincial priorities, and encourage retention and growth in rural communities.

In 2012/2013, ICF approved $2,123,121 in funding initiatives. A total of 61 projects across the Island were assisted, reflecting a total project value of over $6.5 million.

**Regional Development Support Program**
This program assisted community based development organizations in various locations across the Island. Assistance accommodated essential gap funding in support of planning and sustaining community initiatives.

In 2012/2013, 14 projects were approved under the program, with a total contribution of $87,110. The funding was used to support studies and to assist in the planning and development of the applicant's business and economic plans.

**Seasonal Hiring Centre**

The Seasonal Hiring Centre assists the various government departments in filling seasonal employment vacancies. The Centre advises departments on proper hiring procedures and manages an employee selection and referral service. The Seasonal Hiring Centre assisted with the staffing of 77 positions during this report period.

# ACCESS PEI

*Access PEI's mission statement is to provide high quality and efficient delivery of provincial government services to rural and urban clients.*

The purpose of the division is to provide quality services to Islanders through single window access to government programs, services and information. Islanders also access information through several hundred thousand telephone calls that are received and handled on an annual basis.

At Access PEI, customers have access to over 395 government services including: payment of property taxes; remittance of sales tax; renewing drivers licences; renewing vehicle registrations; obtaining marriage licences; obtaining fishing licences; and availability of government job application forms.

In 2012/2013 Access PEI served 190,194 customers and performed 286,784 transactions totalling $51,377,249.29 in revenue.

| DATE | SITE | CLIENTS | TRANSACTIONS | REVENUE | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2012/13 | ALBERTON | 6818 | 9819 | $1,407,326.32 | 3.58 |
| 2012/13 | CHARLOTTETOWN | 81234 | 125086 | $17,073,503.79 | 42.71 |
| 2012/13 | MONTAGUE | 19459 | 29590 | $6,436,221.71 | 10.23 |
| 2012/13 | O'LEARY | 7460 | 11323 | $1,897,682.10 | 3.92 |
| 2012/13 | SOURIS | 15696 | 20677 | $3,323,766.91 | 8.25 |
| 2012/13 | SUMMERSIDE | 47967 | 72570 | $18,272,712.68 | 25.22 |
| 2012/13 | TIGNISH | 5571 | 8434 | $1,533,879.35 | 2.93 |
| 2012/13 | WELLINGTON | 5989 | 9285 | $1,432,156.43 | 3.15 |
| **TOTAL** | | **190,194** | **286,784** | **$51,377,249.29** | **100** |

Access PEI is the public face of government throughout Prince Edward Island providing Islanders with access to provincial government programs and services on behalf of all government departments. The division also provides administrative support to other provincial government departments within the eight sites.

**There are eight Access PEI sites that provide a full range of government services to Islanders.**

Work was completed on March 31 for the Driver and Vehicle System (DVS). All staff completed an extensive training program to prepare for the deployment of the new system. The development was a cooperative effort between Access PEI, Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and IT Shared Services.

Work is ongoing on the development of the next phase of a comprehensive computer system that will make it easier for staff to deliver Highway Safety programs and services. This is a cooperative effort between Access PEI, Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal and IT Shared Services. The intent of the system is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Access PEI's operations by providing staff with the detailed information on the steps required to conduct various programs and services.

Staff training is conducted on an ongoing basis to ensure that staff is familiar with the procedures involved in the delivery of programs and services. On an annual basis, the Director of Access PEI meets with other departmental directors responsible for the programs and services delivered by Access PEI. This is a valuable tool in providing feedback to the departments for which Access PEI delivers services.